

REMARKS

This paper is submitted in response to the Office Action dated March 16, 2010, wherein (a) claims 1-9, 11-13, 14, 18-29, 32-42, 45-53 are pending; (b) claims 1, 4, 6, 23, 28, 36 and 41 were rejected as obvious over Wipf in view of EP 1295820 and Francis (US 1,810,410); (c) claims 2, 3, 5 and 49 stand rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103 as being unpatentable over Wipf in view of '820 and Francis, and further in view Pickel, *et al.* (US 6,354,427); (d) claims 11-13 and 51 stand rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103 as being unpatentable over Wipf in view of '820 and Francis, and further in view of Clopton (US 5,076,422); (e) claims 15, 19, 20, 24, 29, 33, 34, 37, 42, 45 and 46 stand rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103 as being unpatentable over Wipf in view of '820 and Francis, and further in view of Leemkuil (US 5,191,959); (f) claims 14, 16, 28 and 30 stand rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103 as being unpatentable over Wipf in view of '820 and Francis and Clopton, and further in view of Zurcher (US Pubn. 2002/0053499); (g) claims 25 and 38 stand rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103 as being unpatentable over Wipf in view of '820 and Francis, and further in view of Steeber, *et al.* (US 6,230,874); (h) claim 27 stands rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103 as being unpatentable over Wipf in view of '820 and Francis and Clopton, and further in view of Barth, *et al.* (US 6,394,260); (i) claims 26 and 39 stand rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103 as being unpatentable over Wipf in view of '820 and Francis, and further in view of Fellner, *et al.* (US 4,513,858); and then (j) claims 21, 22, 35, 47, 48 and 53 stand as allowed; (k) and claims 18, 32, 40 and 52 were objected to, but indicated as allowable if re-written into independent form.

By way of foregoing, claims 1, 28 and 41 are currently amended. Claims 18 and 32 are canceled. Claim 1 is amended to include each and every limitation of claim 18, claim 28 is amended to include each and every limitation of claim 32, thereby effectively re-writing allowable claims 28 and 32, respectively, into independent form, while claim 41 has also been amended to include each and every limitation of prior claims 18 and 32..

The other claim amendments are merely formal in nature.

Therefore, no new matter has been added.

Thus, claims 1-9, 11-13, 15, 19-29, 33-42, and 45-53 remain currently pending.

Reconsideration of the application, as amended, is respectfully requested.

Rejections Under 35 U.S.C. § 103

As set forth above, each of claims 18 and 32 have been effectively re-written into independent form, via their respective amendment into claims 1 and 28. Because claims 18 and 32 were indicated as allowable in the outstanding office action, applicants submit that all of the independent claims are allowable, including each of claims 1 and 28.

Additionally, claim 41, which was indicated as allowable if re-written into independent form, is now dependent on claim 1, as amended. Further, claim 52 remains dependent on now amended claim 28, which for the foregoing reasons, should both now be allowable.

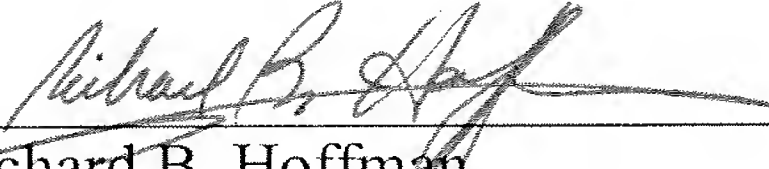
Reconsideration and withdrawal of the outstanding obviousness rejection is respectfully requested.

CONCLUSION

Applicants believe that each of the outstanding rejections, objections and/or other concerns have either been accommodated, traversed or rendered moot. Therefore, the applicant is in condition for Allowance. Should there be any outstanding issue that the office believes may be remedied via telephone conference, please contact the undersigned at 312-474-6300.

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Respectfully submitted,

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